



Minutes of the:
Bayfield County Sheriff's Committee Meeting
July 17, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Held in the Bayfield County EOC, Washburn, WI

The meeting of the Bayfield County Sheriff's Committee was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Bayfield County *Chair* Jeremy Oswald. A roll call was taken by *Chair* Jeremy Oswald, as follows: Dennis M. Pocernich - present; John Rautio - present; Jeff Silbert - present; *Vice Chair* Larry Fickbohm - present. Total: 5 present. A quorum was present to conduct business.

The following were also present for today's meeting: *Emergency Management Director*- Meagan Quaderer; *Emergency Management Assistant*- Maria Renz; *Veteran's Services Officer*- Kevin Johnson; *Sheriff* - Tony Williams virtual; *Chief Deputy* - Andy Runice 4:03pm

2. Approval of Minutes of June 19, 2023

Motion by Rautio, seconded by Silbert to approve the Minutes of the Monthly Bayfield County Sheriff's Committee Meeting held on June 19, 2023. Motion carried, 5-0.

3. Public Comment: None.

4. Child Support Office

- a. The **Budget Summary** was presented by Kevin Johnson, Bayfield County's Veteran's Services Officer. Johnson reports that the department is overbudget in the mileage line item because it was unexpectedly reduced for this year's budget. Johnson will bring a proposal for an amendment in the future. The mileage budget reimburses volunteers transporting veterans to and from appointments, and veterans who need mileage reimbursement for appointments.
- b. **Department Overview:** Johnson presented the department overview with the following agenda item.
- c. **Discussion and Possible Action regarding the Veteran's Benefits Specialist Position:** Johnson reported that Michelle Anderson has resigned and will continue working until August 31st. The position was clerical before becoming a benefits specialist position with Anderson. For the replacement, Johnson would like to see it as a full-time position. Included in the packet is a spreadsheet that shows the support for the increase. The database information shows the interactions between the Veteran's Department and Veterans but does not include answering phone calls or in-person visits. The position has already been posted as a 75% job. Johnson is requesting that

the committee approves and recommends increasing the position to 100% which is 40 hours a week. Rautio believes that the number of Vets they service deserves a full-time position. The topic was presented at the Personnel Committee, with no action due to the request of gaining this committee's opinion first. The position requires that the applicant goes through the required training and continued education hours.

Motion by Rautio, seconded by Fickbohm to send the motion to personnel to make the veteran's position to be hired at full time. Motion Carried 5-0

5. Emergency Management

- a. The **Budget Summary** was presented by Meagan Quaderer, Director of Bayfield County Emergency Management. Quaderer reported the department is over what they expected to get for revenues. Some areas in the budget are over, but they have grants to cover the overage. A budget amendment will be presented in the future.
- b. **Department Overview:** Quaderer reported that they have continued many of the same projects. The consolidated PSAP, Public Safety Answering Point, also known as the dispatch center, Board of Directors has met. The new psap grant is due next month. There is a meeting with the state on Friday for final review. The department is well underway for fair planning and is partnering with Como. They will be hosting a demo in the grandstands with hands-on practice for putting out grease fires. Utility safety is the theme of the year and how to respond booklets are being created. Ashland County has hired their new Emergency Manager a few weeks ago and is doing well. Quaderer has been training her and she will be helping at the fair. Quaderer reported that she wanted the committee to be aware of the recent EMS concerns. The County Wide EMS service is utilized to have as an MCI team and help the other agencies. Many of the EMS agencies are struggling with covering their areas. Some directors are wondering about the county wide EMS becoming a transporting agency. You can bring in county or private coverage however, private coverage may not offer enough coverage. Providing EMS service is statutorily the town's responsibilities. Towns cannot increase their taxes to help the service, they can only propose a referendum. If the County Wide EMS became a transporting agency, the towns would contract the county's services. It's a multifaceted problem. Pocernich suggests the possibilities of the towns voting for a separate levy for fire and EMS. Quaderer stated that ATT is now considering using the Hillside tower to increase their service. She also reported that the county administrator cut the check today for a used truck, a Ford F150 half ton, from Ashland Ford for the Incident Command Trailer.

6. Sheriff's Office

- a. **Budget Summary:** Budget Report included. Sheriff Williams reported that once the new vehicles are equipped, they will have five to sell and go into the fund. The auction company will grab the squads from Ashland Ford. The current projection is that the squad budget will be in the deficit by about \$80,000 by end of the year, but by April of next year, it should be back in the positive.
- b. **Department Overview:** Sheriff Williams reported that the investigators cleared up a couple of burglaries in Sawyer, Bayfield, and Ashland counties. The burglar is currently in the Sawyer County jail. Heroin and Fentanyl are still a big problem in the county, and the Sheriff's office responded to an overdose death the other day. The Sheriff was in the Barnes parade, and the Chief in the Cable parade, and there were four squads in the Mason parade. Sheriff Williams stated that he wanted to make the committee aware that they will be requesting for the next budget year to hire two additional deputies. They would like to hire an additional recreational officer and one additional patrol deputy to bring their road deputies up to 14. This would accommodate the shift schedule with three deputies on days, three on nights, and one flex to cover shifts. Anticipating the costs to be \$90,000 per deputy, however, the DNR pays back about 70% of the recreational officer's budget. A new bill was passed for jailers to go back to protected status. Protected status starts next year, and each jailer has the option to opt-in or out. If they opt-in, their retirement payment goes up by 6-7% and comes out of their wages. Since the increase in payment is paid by the employee instead of the employer, the Sheriff will request a 2.5% raise and a move up of two steps on the wage scale for current jailers that opt-in. New jailers will start at step 1. Jailers will only have one opportunity to opt-in to protective status. There are no policies for transgender inmates, along with male or female neither. Silbert reported that he searched and found no clear state policy on this topic, just make them feel safe and comfortable. The committee would like to add a discussion on policies to the agenda for next month when the Jail Administrator is available. Sheriff Williams stated that the office will be getting all their equipment out to the fairgrounds for the fair, so people can see it, climb in, and officers present.
- c. **Jail Overview:** Sheriff Williams combined the overviews.
- d. **Discussion and Possible Action regarding opening all County Roads to UTV/ATV traffic:** Chairman Oswald asked to discuss this topic due to this item going to the full board soon. Pocernich suggests hosting a public hearing. Sheriff Williams stated that a full public hearing on it was posted for August 9th at 5pm in the Bayfield County Board Room. Sheriff Williams stated his concern is safety and won't argue against it since it is the county highway's department. He would like to make sure the townships are on board as well, and they should request the highway to open. His

suggestion is not to blanket open them all. Pocernich doesn't believe the highways should open for traffic. ATVs are not meant to be used on highways. Silbert agrees. Oswald would like to know what rules apply to them. Sheriff reports they need headlights and cannot have special lights. They do not have safety features and a license is not required. Pocernich stated that current open highways are meant to get from trail to trail. Sheriff thinks the county could pass an ordinance to require a license. ATVS age limit is 16 on highways. Chief Deputy Runice stated he has similar beliefs. There are pros and cons to opening all the roads. Vice Chair Fickbohm stated that Port Wing doesn't want them open, Herbster is mixed, and Bell wants theirs open. No action required.

7. Other

- a. **Discussion and Possible Action regarding endorsement of safety crosswalks in Cornucopia, Herbster, and Port Wing:** Vice Chair Fickbohm requested this topic because it's currently in discussion. He reported that the state guys are requesting mapping with community input. These towns are in favor of the crosswalk. The plan is to install a motion detecting flashing light coming from both ways, with a painted crosswalk. County highway will do the construction of it. Since it's a state highway, the towns will be requesting the state to cover the bill. Silbert thinks it's a great idea, flashing lights would make a difference and be more responsive.
- b. **Discussion regarding Veteran Cemetery Stone Repair Project:** Johnson reported that the idea is to inventory the headstones and markers and facilitate through the VA to repair broken headstones.
- c. **Discussion regarding Squad fund balances:** Discussion occurred during the Sheriff Office Budget Summary
- d. **Agenda:** Discussion on submitting agenda items during the respective time period and creating an other agenda line item to allow for other topics to be discussed.

Silbert departed at 5:59pm

8. Next Meeting Date, August 21, 2023, at 4 pm in the EOC

9. Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Sheriff's, Emergency Management, Veterans, Child Support Committee of the Bayfield County Board of Supervisors, *Chairman* Oswald adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.



Sheriff's, Emergency Management, Veterans, Child Support
Committee of the Bayfield County Board of Supervisors

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Renz
Bayfield County Emergency Management